

F 231  
Feltman  
March 1954

Feltman

25100

# That men may plow in hope





Sowing millet in Bombay State, India

**AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS, INC.**

156 Fifth Avenue

New York 10, N. Y.



# THAT MEN MAY PLOW IN HOPE

By RALPH A. FELTON

## ***What is an agricultural missionary?***

When a suicide plane struck a small boat in the waters of the Philippines, a farm boy from Indiana was one of the eight rescued. Two months in a hospital gave him time to think about his future. Steel plows or steel bayonets? Eight years to the day after he left the Philippines in uniform, he was back there, trained to begin service as an agricultural missionary. Today he says, "It's great to work where you're needed; to feel that the people at home are with you."

This world's food is both an economic and a moral problem. No one realizes this more clearly than the peasant farmer under the millstones of landlordism, usury, and low-crop returns. Agriculture is the basic vocation for three-fourths of the people served by the churches in their world missions, and there is need for a ministry through agriculture developed and pursued with the same skill, insight, and spiritual devotion that have characterized our preaching ministry. A better life for millions of people awaits basic improvements in agriculture, but enduring success depends also upon man's relationships to his neighbor in the stewardship of resources which are God's. There is little gain in promoting a technology whereby the rich may become richer and the poor poorer, or in merely replacing one form of materialism by another. The agricultural missionary is in a unique position for assisting people technically to a better



Measuring the harvest



Well-drilling machine,  
Vadala, India



level of life, and for helping to provide the moral and spiritual climate in which the more abundant life can be realized.

At the base of the political revolution sweeping much of Asia today is a hunger revolution. Millions of oppressed people are coming to realize that their families were not predestined to a life of misery and want. Missionaries, by their emphasis on the Fatherhood of God and the application of Christ's teachings, have helped to generate this rising hope. Now the legitimate demands of underprivileged millions for a larger measure of social and economic justice constitute probably the greatest challenge in the long history of missions.

The people are moderate in what they ask: not power, or luxury, but some land to work, and food and shelter for their families. They are grateful for the help of any who join with them in achieving this goal. The agricultural missionary identifies himself with this common cause of nearly half the people of the world. In the presence of political unrest, he works toward a solid foundation of mutual self-help, stable home and family life, land reform, and improved farm practices. In the presence of blighting materialism, he can relate men to God, the Creator and Father, who wishes all of His children well.

Where poverty, hunger and unrest are greatest, the agricultural missionary works with the people, aiding them to a better way of life. While he works with the soil, crops and livestock, his chief interest is the people, their homes, communities and churches. His concern is both better things to live with and spiritual values to live by. Where there is suffering and unrest, his goal is peace and the abundant life Christ desires for all mankind.

## ***How the agricultural missionary works***

The work is as varied as the countries and the peoples the missionaries serve. With devotion and skill, they start with what the people have and help them improve it.







French Alpine goats have been brought to Mexico, to add milk to the diet of undernourished children

**IN MEXICO** In a village of Mexico, Lester Zook, graduate of Pennsylvania State College, has his station wagon loaded with fertilizer, insecticides, setting eggs, and bags of seed. He is ready to start out for a two-day trip among Mexican farmers. Before he gets back, he will help to build compost pits, lay off furrows for terracing the hillsides, confer with village pastors, and pray with the people in their homes. He will have made a score of friends.

At the foot of an extinct Mexican volcano is the village of San Felipe, with its little church. The members of this church

have more than two hundred prized apple trees, Red and Golden Delicious. Wisconsin-born Claude Kellogg has taught the people to graft stock from good Missouri trees onto the scrubby local trees. This is the way Kellogg works. He grafts something better onto what the people have. To village pastors and the people he is a trusted friend.

**IN ECUADOR** On the thirsty slopes of the Andes, agriculturally trained Bruce Beardsley at Picalqui and Rolland Flory at Bella Vista are working with the landless Indians who comprise 60 per cent of the country's population. They are giving their time mainly to the Indian peons, where the agony

Teaching better gardening methods in Latin America





of poverty and need is greatest. They know that land is the key to the Indian's heart, and through their efforts Indians long deprived of their land may become owners again. The Indians appreciate humility, and love from those who come to aid them. Bible teaching provides spiritual values needed for a more abundant life.

**IN EGYPT** Robert Turnbull is at work in Egypt. Here is the most densely populated land in the world, with as many as four persons trying to live from one acre. They have cotton to sell, but no milk for the children. Turnbull has set up

Herd of registered Jersey cattle, Assiut, Egypt. The native Egyptian cow produces about 2400 pounds of milk per year. These, with proper care and feeding, will produce up to ten thousand.



four stud centers for breeding up the native cows, and he is planning for eight more. Turnbull is also introducing soil-building forage crops, and bringing in Swiss milk goats and improved chickens. Says Bob, "The problems of hunger and misery are both economic and spiritual. We aim to apply the Gospel to all of life's needs."

**IN INDIA** You will find Cornell-trained Gifford Towle in western India. With Indian colleagues he serves the farmers on a large pilot area where the soil is poor and famine is common. But Towle does not believe in just giving out famine relief; he also helps the farmers deepen their wells, so they can irrigate their land and get better crops. His Indian colleagues and the government officers who work with him are proud of the part they have. "Service in agriculture," says Towle, "gives us an opportunity to express the spirit of Christ as we help distressed people in their struggle against hunger and want."

John Patterson of Kansas has developed at Vikarabad, India, what he calls "the Village Center Plan." There are sixteen village centers, each with an Indian pastor, a teacher, and a health worker. Each team of trained workers serves some fifteen villages, where they work to improve health, agriculture, and home life as a devoted ministry service of the church.

The names India Village Service and William H. Wiser have become household words to many. Dr. and Mrs. Wiser lived in villages of North India for many years. There they learned to know the people—how they think and feel. Then they established India Village Service with Indian colleagues, who go about on foot or bicycles, talking with village families about





Christian farmer inspects a field of rice producing over twice the nation's average yield



Farmer and extension worker in western India take pride in crop saved by spraying



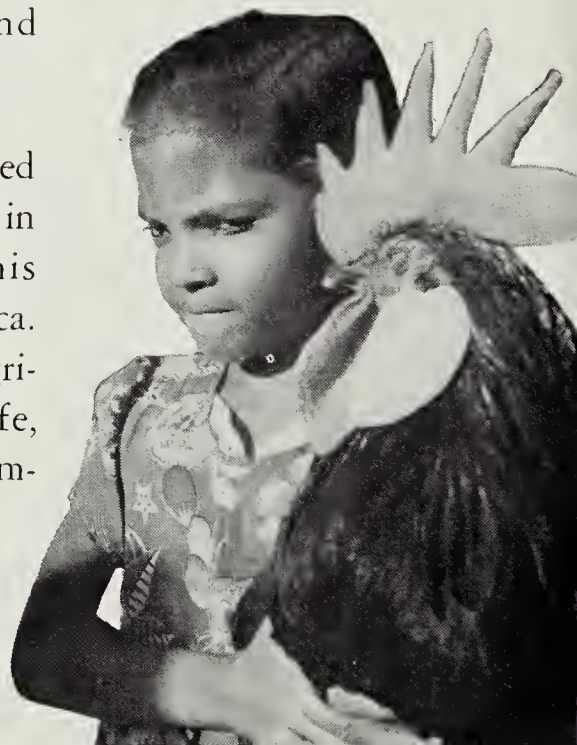
An Indian student preparing seed-plot for wheat

their flocks, land, and crops, the need for water, or the cure of disease. "Then they share their problems with us," says Dr. Wisner. "Only as we become friends can we discover their 'felt needs' and help to meet them." The Wisers and their colleagues are welcomed by the people and government officials alike.

Helen Fehr went out to teach in a girl's high school, but she saw at once that "on the lower rung of the ladder are three-fourths of the people, who live by agriculture and village crafts. They are the overworked and underpaid class. Their common legacy is hunger and disease. Religion must reach the common people in the home and out where they earn their living."

So in the little village of Seonaguada, in Central India, seventy miles from the railway, Miss Fehr has pioneered in "training men and boys on their farms, and the women in their homes." Demonstrations, exhibits, and short-term classes for adults in the villages are her favorite methods. "Ours is really not a school," she claims, "but a spirit of cooperation in which the people try improved methods in the home, in the gardens and fields, and teach each other." This means better homes, schools, and churches.

**IN AFRICA** Fenton Sands observed the needs of people in other lands, so he applied to his church board to send him to Africa. The holder of two degrees in agriculture from Cornell, he and his wife, a home economist, are working to im-







Home method of storing grain, Africa

prove life in a large corner of Liberia. Sands helps to operate three school farms, but his chief concern is moving the rice down from the hills to the swamp lands where it belongs. In its place, cover crops on the slopes will help to check erosion. The Sands are working to improve the diet and health of the people by helping to produce eggs, meat, and soya beans.

Changed home and farm practices make for self-supporting churches. Seminary students in Cuttington College are taught agriculture, so the young clergy may see how to improve all of life at the same time, economically and spiritually.

A Dakota farm boy, Alex Overold, came home from military service in Africa unable to put the needs of the people there out of his mind. After graduation from agricultural college, his church at his request sent him to Zululand. This agriculturist says the soil there needs three things, nitrogen, more nitrogen, and still more nitrogen; and the people need Christian homes, and self-supporting churches.

His students come to school by families. There are now eighty families living on a two hundred acre farm while they go to school.

Last June, Overold helped to hold the first big county fair. In purpose and spirit it was much like the one back home in McHenry County, North Dakota.

Pageant in Southern Rhodesia, showing how King Soil Erosion is conquered by the combined efforts of the church, the people, and the agricultural demonstrator





Winnowing rice in Korea



## **Special needs**

The agricultural missionary usually follows a balanced program to include all of life, but some needs call for special attention.

**BETTER FOOD** Mass hunger in the world today presents a grave problem. Our world sets a lopsided table. A few countries are better fed than before World War II, but in nearly all lands where foreign missions serve, hunger has greatly increased. Japan is trying to live today with a fourth less food than was her meager diet before the war. Studies by the United Nations showed Korea to be the most poorly fed country in the whole family of nations. Even before the recent tragedy

there, the Korean people had 1458 calories per person compared with 3250 calories in the better fed countries.

In Angola, Africa, two Canadians, Sidney Gilchrist, M.D., and Allen Knight, an agronomist, are working together to improve human nutrition. Says Dr. Gilchrist, "Many of my patients are ill because they are hungry. If they are not hungry from lack of food, they are hungry because of an ill-balanced diet." Knight responds by encouraging the people to grow soya beans, improve poultry husbandry, produce milk and other proteins needed for a better diet.

Most Africans still believe that evil spirits or devils bring on their diseases. Here they are: tuberculosis, pellagra, rickets, kwashiorkor, scurvy, and skin diseases. Plenty of devils! Preaching alone does not help much. The agricultural missionary deals with all of life as he helps the people improve their soil and grow better food, as a part of Christ's way to more abundant life. A prominent African Christian said: "Ninety per cent of the churches in Africa are rural, but the people are not really Christian until they give up superstition and farm their fields as stewards of God."

**BAD DEBTS OR GOOD CREDIT** Usury and credit are another problem. When Allen Huber reached the Philippines, he found capital scarce and small farmers struggling to pay interest of 60 per cent on borrowed money. Farmers who borrowed grain paid back at the rate of two bushels for one. Poverty was everywhere. The people were discouraged, and so were the rural pastors. How could a barrio church become self-supporting? In 1938, Huber helped to organize the first credit







union. It took ten meetings. Since then, 125 such cooperatives have been started.

By this means young people have been educated; homes have been built; rice lands have been purchased; medical help has been secured; and self-supporting churches have been built. In all of this, the members have relied upon their own efforts and on sympathetic counsel, not on government or mission aid.

"Some day we hope there will be twenty thousand credit unions in the Islands," says Huber, "one for every two hundred families."

Village women in the Philippines at their age-old daily task of hulling rice







Six million farm families live on the mountain farms of Japan, in an area the size of California

**LAND HUNGER** Statistics do not convey the pangs of hunger nor the pain of poverty, but we must not ignore them. The Indian Famine Commission in its monumental report estimated that under present methods of cultivation, 1.5 acres of crop-land per person are needed to provide a minimum adequate diet in Asia. But what do we find? Japan has but .3 acre per person, Korea .6, China approximately .8, and India has .8 acre. At the turn of the century, India had 1.2 acres of crop-

land per person, but with the steady rise in population, that amount has declined to the present figure of .8 acre.

Today land has become a matter of major concern to nearly a billion rural people in the world. As population increases, the fierce struggle for land begins, and men vie with each other for plots of land to till. A new milestone is being placed as people in no less than forty different countries are struggling for land reforms.

Ever since the Indians of the Andes lost their well-terraced hillsides to the Spanish invader, they have longed for land to till as their own again. Land hunger is a central fact in their lives. A minister was once speaking to some Indians about the return of Jesus. One listened in reverence and then asked, "When He comes will we get our land back?"

High on the plateau of Bolivia, two Canadians, Earl C. Merrick and Willard Chandler, heard the cry of the Indians for land. Their mission bought a thousand-acre farm, and some forty families came with it. Most Indians in South America live in a state of serfdom. You buy land, and the seller throws in the serfs.

The thousand acres were divided into small farms. These were then sold to the serf families on long term contract. New homes were built, and the schools began to fill up. There are ten schools in that district now, instead of one, with twenty-six teachers, and 704 pupils. The old serfs, once ripe for revolution but now proud landowners, have become leaders in the community. Young Indians are becoming teachers and church workers.

The Bolivian Government now has a program on foot to copy this democratic plan of land reform. The superintendent of rural schools in Bolivia says, "We consider this the most successful of



all projects to rehabilitate the Indian and bring stable government.

Let us not get the idea that land reform is new in the world. It dates back to the commission given two thousand years ago—"to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, to set at liberty those who are oppressed."

Boys at rural center, Lebanon, learn masonry as they lay foundation for a new poultry house



**4-H CLUB WORK** Burl Slocum, trained at Wisconsin and Cornell, with agricultural extension experience, had hardly reached the Philippines when the government asked him to lead classes in extension methods for their workers. Within three years he had written twenty-three 4-H Club bulletins, now used widely throughout the Islands. Next came the development of farm study classes for young farmers who could spend at least three hours a week in study. To date, some 2,275 have been helped by these classes. Slocum works closely with the rural pastors and has assisted them in securing special training in agriculture and the problems of village life.

He had a good position at home but "it became clear to me," he said, "that God wanted me to be an agricultural missionary, where the need is greatest."

**EXTENSION** Since 1920, J. J. De Valois, a graduate in agriculture of Iowa State College, has been pioneering in agricultural improvements at Katpadi, near Vellore, South India. Poultry and milk goats received his early attention, but over the years extension work has been done in improving field and garden crops, and in breeding livestock. The annual Rural Fair and Exhibition attracts as many as thirty thousand people.

At Katpadi, a diversified farm is now operating at a profit on land once considered hopeless. Mr. De Valois' unique contribution, however, probably lies in the way he has projected the influence of this institution into neighboring villages and beyond. Today, for example, there are three branch poultry farms, and bulls are sent to various villages, for breeding purposes.





Some Lebanese students and a young teacher admire Holstein cow just imported

A Burmese farm family on the way to market





He and his Indian colleagues do much work among village youth. Village organizations have been started, and each chooses a project to carry on for at least a year, in agriculture, poultry raising, kitchen gardening, planting papayas, etc.

Mrs. De Valois, a doctor, assists in the growing public health program.

The outreach of Katpadi goes far. Breeding stock, setting eggs, and day-old chicks are now shipped all over India, and to Burma and Arabia. Mr. De Valois' little manuals on Poultry, on Gardening, and on Milk Goats are widely used.

**AND HOPE** An Ohio farm boy, Carl Dille, is doing pioneer  
**NEW FAITH** work with the rural church in Africa. In Angola,  
Where he works, the ordained African pastor  
serves from thirty to seventy villages. Each village has a lay  
leader who cares for the church when the pastor is not there,  
which naturally is most of the time. Dille works with these young

Student minister at  
training school in  
Portuguese East Africa  
learns to farm,  
thereby to  
help his people  
to a better life





Students learn weaving  
as a means of  
supplementing the meager  
income from the land



men, who are the hope of stable agriculture and better community life in tomorrow's Africa. He trains them to become honorable and trusted leaders, and they build Christian homes free of witchcraft.

Mrs. Dille, a home economics graduate, is doing similar work for the women. Movies and industry tend to destroy the old tribal order, and people like the Dilles work to give the people a new faith and hope on which to rebuild their lives.

### **FAMILIES COME TO SCHOOL**

Over in Mozambique, Africa, is Julian Rea. In that colony, man is "superior." All the woman does is to cook meals, raise the babies, look after the family and do the farm work. Julian's Alma Mater did not teach him to handle a problem like this.

He has a new kind of school spread out over fifteen hundred acres where he educates the whole family at one time. Each



Students at a Christian rural service center in Japan measuring the yield of potatoes from a demonstration farm

family learns to build its own house, to raise its own food according to a new farm plan, and to follow the Christian way of life. The men even raise the cotton, weave cloth, and make clothes for their wives before they complete the three-year course. Each goes back to the village as a trained Christian farmer. Some become teacher-preacher-farmer—all three at the same time. They are the best farmers in their communities. They pass on improved seeds to their neighbors, with the Sunday sermon and the weekday Gospel.

Not only are they self-supporting preachers, but they are demonstrating a better way of life. "Their religion is down to earth," says Rea. "It is also lifting people heavenward."



## **What is Agricultural Missions, Inc.?**

Agricultural Missions, Inc., founded in 1930, is the recognized clearing house for Christian world service in agriculture. It serves over forty-five missions boards and their missionaries working in many different countries. The services of Agricultural Missions, Inc. include:

**YOUTH WORK** Secretaries of Agricultural Missions, Inc. visit agricultural colleges regularly to confer with students on agricultural missions as a life work. Students are given reliable help and guidance as they choose their vocation and prepare for it. Literature is provided and study programs arranged.

**TRAINING COURSES** Special courses are provided annually for missionaries on furlough and for young people under appointment. Since 1930, some 2200 missionaries have attended such courses and received help from specialists in agriculture and rural life. The courses include studies in soil, crops, vegetable production, extension methods, nutrition, 4-H Club work, volunteer leadership training, home and family life, rural social problems, and rural church methods.

The courses are:

- School for Rural Missionaries, held during January of each year at Cornell University
- One-year course in Rural Service Training, Cornell University
- Field Training in Extension Methods, held each year in the Ozarks area, in cooperation with the College of Agriculture, University of Arkansas

- Seminar on Extension Education, held each February at the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.



Young missionaries and agricultural college dean make plans for field training

### **FIELD WORK CONFERENCES**

Field work conferences are arranged in different regions of the world. Agricultural missionaries often work in isolation, and it is helpful if they



can meet from time to time to pool experiences and consider the best use of their resources.

**NEW PROJECTS** Agricultural Missions, Inc. sponsors new field projects—in extension work, community development, agricultural improvement—and assists in securing financial support and personnel for them.

**TECHNICAL SERVICES** Seeds, equipment, and other technical supplies are secured and sent as required to various parts of the world. The organization is always ready to serve rural workers, especially those in isolated places.

**LITERATURE** *Rural Missions*, a service journal, is published quarterly, and supplied free to workers in over sixty countries. It is the channel of information about successful work with rural people. Books, periodicals, and other literature are supplied to missionaries in all parts of the world free or at moderate cost.

**COUNSEL AND EVALUATION** Agricultural Missions, Inc. corresponds with hundreds of missionaries, giving counsel and sharing experience as desired. Just now there is a new effort to test different methods of working with needy people; agricultural missionaries keep notes and evaluate their own work, to share the results of their experience with others. Such experience distilled and tested can be of great value to those working with distressed people on the land.

## ***What is the Rural Missions Cooperating Committee?***

The Rural Missions Cooperating Committee is the link between Agricultural Missions, Inc. and the churches in their world mission. This committee is a "representative committee" of the Division of Foreign Missions, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., and has on it representatives of twenty-eight different communions. These cooperating mission boards through the Rural Missions Cooperating Committee help to support Agricultural Missions, Inc. financially, and take an active part in determining policies and emphases. This provides an effective means whereby the cooperating boards carry forward a significant part of their world service in agriculture.

The work of the Rural Missions Cooperating Committee and Agricultural Missions, Inc. have long been closely coordinated. Some parts of the program go forward under the name of one organization and other parts under the name of the other. The combined funds of the two are used to carry on a strong rural program as a service to the boards and the churches. Agricultural Missions, Inc. has been called the service arm of the Rural Missions Cooperating Committee. Interlocking membership of the two organizations has resulted in large savings to the boards and greater efficiency in carrying forward the total program of rural missions.

Dr. W. Stanley Rycroft, chairman of the Rural Missions Cooperating Committee, urges the churches "to meet the present awakening among distressed village people with the Gospel applied in helpful and practical ways. As we identify ourselves with the people in helping them solve their problems, we earn



their devotion and goodwill. Even more, the people find Christ and His way of life. I know of no better answer to the suffering and tensions of our troubled world.”

### ***World service in agriculture***

Many young people today would like to help build a better world. They are preparing themselves by study and experience, on our farms, in our rural churches, and in colleges of agriculture and home economics. They realize that the major problems of our times are rural. When we speak of land, seed, food, and shelter, we deal with the hopes and fears of nearly half of the people in the world. Peasant people everywhere have come to

Japanese farmer puddling rice plot



realize that they need not live in poverty forever. They ask not for luxury nor political power, but for a chance to plow their fields in hope.

To raise the level of living in densely populated areas is a difficult job. We must deal with the basic causes of poverty, which are often spiritual as well as economic. Christ pointed the way to rewarding service among village people when He declared, "He that loses his life shall find it." Agricultural missionaries are getting results as they work with the people in devotion and faith.

Dr. James K. Mathews, chairman of Agricultural Missions, Inc., says: "The years since World War II have been one of the great 'sending periods' for Christian missionaries. Among the thousands who have gone out were a number of agricultural missionaries serving in various lands. Those entirely engaged in this service number 152 at the present time. As encouraging as this response has been, these are not nearly enough. Mission boards are more than ever interested in making it possible for qualified and dedicated young people to find their life's vocation among the world's rural peoples."



**Church Boards and related organizations currently participating  
in the work of Agricultural Missions, Inc.  
through the Rural Missions Cooperating Committee**

---

African Methodist Episcopal Church  
American Baptist  
    Foreign Mission Society  
    Women's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society  
American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions  
    (Congregational Christian Churches)  
American Friends Board of Missions  
Augustana Lutheran Church  
Church of the Brethren, General Brotherhood Board, Commission on  
    Foreign Missions  
Church of England in Canada, Missionary Society  
Congo Inland Mission  
Evangelical and Reformed Church, Board of International Missions  
Evangelical United Brethren Church, Department of World Missions  
Free Methodist Church, General Missionary Board  
Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities  
Methodist Church  
    Division of World Missions  
    Woman's Division of Christian Service  
National Baptist Convention, Inc.  
Presbyterian Church in USA, Board of Foreign Missions  
Presbyterian Church in Canada, Women's Missionary Society  
Protestant Episcopal Church, National Council  
Reformed Church in America, Board of Foreign Missions  
Seventh-day Adventist, General Conference  
Seventh Day Baptist, Women's Society  
United Christian Missionary Society  
United Church of Canada:  
    Board of Overseas Missions  
    Woman's Missionary Society

United Lutheran Church in America  
Board of Foreign Missions  
Women's Missionary Society  
United Presbyterian Church of North America  
Board of Foreign Missions  
Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society  
YMCA, National Board

## **AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS, INC.**

---

### **Officers**

JAMES K. MATHEWS . . . . . *Chairman*  
M. L. WILSON . . . . . *Vice-chairman*  
J. LEROY DODDS . . . . . *Treasurer*

### **Board of Directors**

David Burpee	Ralph W. Gwinn	Ruth Ransom
John H. Davis	Hazel M. Hauck	Hoch Reid
J. LeRoy Dodds	W. T. Llewellyn	Clifford L. Samuelson
Wynn C. Fairfield	James K. Mathews	C. Leigh Stevens
Elmer A. Fridell	Raymond D. Miller	Samuel Thorne
Sidney D. Gamble	Henry S. Rudolph	M. L. Wilson

IRA W. MOOMAW, *Executive Secretary*

JOHN H. REISNER, *Consultant*

RALPH A. FELTON, *Field Program Analyst*

---

## **AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS, INC.**

**156 Fifth Avenue**

**New York 10, N. Y.**





